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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The University of North Carolina is the oldest of State Universities in point of service, having opened its doors in 1795. Its first president, Joseph Caldwell, was at first professor of mathematics, and science was at all times of absorbing interest to him. He was commissioner for North Carolina in running the boundary line with South Carolina besides doing important work in locating railways and a proposed canal. Under his presidency the State authorized in 1822 a geological and mineralogical survey which was placed in charge of the University. Professor Olmsted, who afterwards returned to Yale and later became State Geologist of New York published what was probably the first report issued by any state survey. The second report was published by Dr. Elisha Mitchell.

In 1824 Caldwell sailed for England to purchase books and instruments for the University. Among these were a number of astronomical instruments which were first used for instruction and observation on a platform erected upon the roof of the president's house. In 1830 a small observatory was erected in which classes were instructed and many observations on celestial phenomena made. The records of these observations were lost and the instruments scattered and broken up during the occupation and reconstruction period. So far as known this was the earliest observatory connected with an educational institution. Caldwell and Mitchell published text books for their classes and the latter contributed scientific articles to Silliman's Journal. Mitchell continued, unaided by the State, his surveys and investigation of the resources of the State. Among other things he measured the height of the peak named for him, Mt. Mitchell, which is the highest peak east of the Rockies. He lost his life in his last ascent of this peak.

Probably the most distinguished scientific investigator in the first seventy-five years of the University's activity was Nicholas M. Hentz who became an authority upon spiders, publishing a book on the spiders of the United States in addition to a considerable number of papers in various journals.

With the coming of the civil war the activities of the University were reduced to a minimum. Out of fourteen members of the faculty who volunteered seven gave up their lives and out of its list of alumni who were capable of bearing arms about one-third were killed. From 1867 to 1878 its doors were practically closed except for a semi-high school kept up by the reconstruction administration. During the last three or four years of this period there being no faculty and no students the doors were left open to wind and weather and any chance marauder.

The re-opening in 1875 was undertaken chiefly on hope and faith. The State had no funds. Its whole system of education which stood high in the middle of the century, had been practically destroyed. Friends and alumni raised $20,000 for repairs and equipment. It was little short of a tragedy. But a splendid fight was made and with the passing years the victory has been won without outside aid. The University had been declared bankrupt by the courts and such property as remained taken away from it except a homestead consisting of its buildings and the immediately surrounding acres. In 1875 it began with an income of about $10,000 which has grown to a half-million, and its real property is valued at a million and a half besides an endowment approaching two millions. Less than $100,000 has been contributed by other than North Carolinians. Its student roll has grown more than fifteen-fold and its faculty shows a similar increase.

The first faculty after the re-opening was made up of young men. President Battle was a far-seeing man and began building anew the school system by establishing the first summer school for teachers in the country. The early graduates went out as missionaries in the cause of education to every nook and corner of the state. For two of these pioneers statues have been erected in the grounds of the State Capitol by a grateful people. Doctor Battle was also deeply interested in science and devoted what funds he could get to develop this side of the University work.

In 1883 four young professors, whose combined age was less than a century, met and decided that the old scientific spirit must be restored and fostered. To this end the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society was founded and its first thin volume issued in 1884. No financial aid could be extended to it by the University for a number of years but its Journal steadily appeared with increasingly valuable contributions; first one annual number, then semi-annually and at last quarterly. Thirty-five volumes have appeared comprising nearly 10,000 pages. The contributions have come chiefly from the faculty and students of the University. The boyish spirit of adventure and trust in the future was shown by the young group of four dubbing themselves "Hump, Rump, Mike and the Blank." The Blank died a tragic death a few years later. Rump, meaning Count Rumford, became the first Director of the U. S. Bureau of Mines and was better known as Dr. Joseph A. Holmes. Mike, a name which meant no lack of respect for the great Faraday, was Phillips who became State Geologist for Texas and then President of the Colorado School of Mines. These three have passed to the Great Beyond. The only one now living is the writer of this article who dared assume, with some camouflage, the name of Sir Humphrey Davy.

It is difficult to estimate the influence upon the University of this society with its monthly public meetings. The spirit of investigation penetrated all departments and later historical, philological and educational Journals appeared, all of which have taken a recognized place in their distinctive fields.

The poverty of the University made it difficult sometimes to hold its professors but at least it had the benefit of their services for a time. Among those who went to other institutions were George F. Atkinson, who did much fine work in botany and entomology and then left for Cornell. Dolly in the midst of his investigations on shock was called to the University of Missouri and W. H. Brown was taken by the Rockefeller Institute to continue his pathological work. Baskerville after ten years of fine work went to the College of the City of New York and Herty, whose work was an inspiration to his students, became editor of the *Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry.*

It is interesting to note that in recent years two members of the faculty of the University of North Carolina have been elected to the presidency of the American Chemical Society and one to the presidency of the American Zoological Society. Twelve of them have been placed on the starred list of American Men of Science.

FRANCIS PRESTON VENABLE

INSTALLATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

The installation of the chapter of the Sigma Xi at the University was held at the home of Dr. Joseph Hyde Pratt in Chapel Hill, N. C., on the evening of May 26, 1920. At this meeting the following were present:

Clarence E. McClung, President of the Society of the Sigma Xi.
Joseph Hyde Pratt (Yale)
James Munsie Bell (Cornell)
Francis Preston Venable
Henry Van Peters Wilson
William DeBerniere MacNider
William Chambers Coker
Alvin Sawyer Wheeler.

As senior member of the local group, Doctor Pratt called the meeting to order. He welcomed President McClung to Chapel Hill and expressed the regret of the chapter-to-be at the inability of Secretary Ward to accept the invitation to participate in the installation ceremonies. The stimulus of Sigma Xi at other institutions would be felt also at the University of North Carolina, which holds a leading position among Southern Institutions for its productiveness in scientific research.

A brief history of the circumstances connected with the petition for the chapter was then recounted by Doctor Bell. Several years ago the four members of Sigma Xi at Chapel Hill met to consider the advisability and the prospect of petitioning for a charter. The four members were:

Joseph Hyde Pratt (Yale)
James Munsie Bell (Cornell)
Robert Lane James (Cornell)
Vivian LeRoy Chrisler (Nebraska).

There was unanimity that the petition should be asked for. It was decided to invite seven other members of the faculty to join in the petition for the chapter, an invitation which all seven heartily approved. The seven were:

Francis Preston Venable
William Cain
Henry VanPeters Wilson
Charles Holmes Herty

William DeBerniere MacNider
William Chambers Coker
Alvin Sawyer Wheeler.

Of the original eleven petitioners three had since left the University: R. L. James, V. L. Chrisler and Charles H. Herty who is now editor of the *Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry.*

Before presenting the charter, President McClung briefly addressed the novitiates on the history and purpose of the Society. The criteria for membership and for associate membership were explained to the new chapter. The delay in granting the charter was due to the constitutional amendment regarding associate membership. Fortunately the settlement of the amendment opened the way for the granting of new charters, the first of which was that to the University of North Carolina. President McClung "pleaded guilty to his first offense" in installing a chapter and spoke of the excellent prospect for an active chapter in the South.

The Society's pledge was then administered by the President to the co-petitioners, Doctors Venable, Wilson, MacNider, Coker and Wheeler. With Dr. McClung as teller, officers of the new chapter were elected:

President—Joseph Hyde Pratt
Secretary—James Munsie Bell.

Further organization of the chapter was postponed to a later meeting and the initiation of Professor Cain who was detained by illness was completed later by signing the constitution.

The chapter having been organized, President McClung formally delivered the charter to the president of the chapter. Doctor Pratt expressed the thanks of the members of the chapter to President McClung for his active interest and for his good wishes for the success of the new organization.

The society was then entertained at dinner by Doctor Pratt.

On Tuesday evening, May 25, Doctor McClung addressed the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society on the subject Material Basis of Heredity. In introducing him to the society, Dr. H. V. Wilson said that of all the investigators in science only a few arrived at a great truth, one which marked a distinct advance. Doctor McClung was one of the few fortunate ones who had so contributed, his subject being heredity especially in its relation to the determination of sex. Beginning with the fundamental statement that growth takes place by cell division, it was shown that in some way the characters of the offspring are related to the constitution of the cells from which the individual sprang. The cell structure was then described, with emphasis of course on the nucleus and its content. The characteristics of the chromosomes, their number, size and general physical relations led to the conclusion that these in some way were connected with the character of the offspring. Thus, for certain grasshoppers the female cell contains 12 pairs of such chromosomes before division or 12 single chromosomes after cell division; while the male cell contains 11 pairs of such chromosomes and a single one besides. After cell division two different cells result, one with 11 and one with 12 chromosomes. Fertilization of a female cell of 12 units by a male cell of 11 units produces a male individual; while fertilization of a female cell of 12 units by a male cell of 12 units produces a female individual. This is only one instance where the operation of Mendel's Law is given a mechanical explanation. It is obvious that other characters of the offspring might be connected with the individual chromosomes. Work has been done on that line and much more is in progress.

Dr. McClung's lecture was listened to with great interest by a large audience. After the lecture Doctor Coker entertained the Society at a smoker. It is needless to add that the after-meeting was the occasion of much further discussion on the topic of heredity.

The Elisha Mitchell Society has had a continued and active existence since 1883 when it was founded largely through the efforts of the late Dr. Joseph A. Holmes, who later became director of the Bureau of Mines, of the late Professor Joshua Gore, and of Dr. Francis P. Venable, its first president and now one of the charter members of the Sigma Xi chapter at the University of North Carolina. During all this period monthly meetings have been held, the programs consisting of reports of research work done by University professors or students, and of topics of general scientific interest. The Journal of the Society, also published since 1883, is largely the record of the scientific work of the University. It is now issued quarterly and for a number of years has been edited by Dr. W. C. Coker. The meetings of the society and the publication of the Journal have served greatly as stimuli in scientific investigation.

The newly installed chapter held its second meeting on Monday evening, May 31, at the home of Dr. Joseph H. Pratt. The following were elected to membership in the society:

JOHN FREDERICK DASHIELL *Associate Professor of Psychology*

Children's Sense of Harmonies in Colors and Tones. Jour. Exp. Psychol. Dec., 1917. A Multiple Unit System of Maze Construction. Psychol. Bull., July, 1919. Complete vs. Alternate Methods of Learning Two Habits. Psychol. Rev., March, 1920. Experimental Analysis of the Maze Problem. Jour. of Psychobiology. Proof read. Presented before American Psychological Association.

THOMAS FELIX HICKERSON *Associate Professor of Civil Engineering*

Formulas for Investment Calculations. Jour. Elisha Mitchell Sci. Soc. Culverts and Small Bridges for North Carolina Highways. (In collaboration with C. R. Thomas.) Econ. Paper #28, N. Carolina Geol. and Econ. Survey. Considerations Governing the Proper Location of Roads. Econ. Paper #43, N. Car. Geol. and Econ. Survey. A New Field Method for Locating Circular Curves by Deflections from the P. I. Eng. and Contracting Mag., June 2, 1920. Tables published in pamphlet form by the author.

WILLIAM FREDERICK PROUTY *Professor of Stratigraphic Geology*

Roads and Road Materials of Alabama. Bul. Ala. Geol. Survey, 11, 1911. Crystalline Marbles of Alabama. Bul. Geol. Soc. 27:437-450 (1916). Meso-Silurian Deposits of Maryland, Am. Jour. Sci., (1918) 26:563-574. The Coosa Coal Fields of Alabama. E&M. Jour. Nov. 6, 1919. Crystalline Graphites of Alabama. Mineral Index, Eng. and Min. Jour. 1918, 1919, 1920; and others.

The following graduate students were elected to associate membership:

TROY MUNROE ANDREWS, M.S.	*Chemistry*
JOHN NATHANIEL COUCH, A.B.	*Botany*
ISAAC VILAS GILES, B.S.	*Chemistry*
BLACKWELL MARKHAM, A.M.	*Zoology*
SAMUEL CLEMENT SMITH, A.B.	*Chemistry*
IRA WELLBORN SMITHEY, M.S.	*Chemistry*
JASPER LEONIDAS STUCKEY, A.B.	*Geology*
HENRY ROLAND TOTTEN, A.M.	*Botany*

JAMES M. BELL, *Secretary*